

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 AF-06 NEA-09 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-10 EB-07 FEA-01 OMB-01 COME-00 TRSE-00

/091 W

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R 241948Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7819

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

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AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: GDS

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TAGS: PFOR, FR, XA

SUBJECT: FRENCH VIEWS ON BANGUI FRANCOPHONE SUMMIT

REF: PARIS 5612 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY AND COMMENT: THE QUAI IS MILDLY SATISFIED WITH THE RESULTS OF THE BANGUI SUMMIT. WHILE NO IMPORTANT DECISIONS WERE TAKEN, MOST OF THE FRANCOPHONE STATES FIND DISCUSSION OF THEIR ECONOMIC PROBLEMS WITH EACH OTHER HELPFUL. THE FRENCH REGARD SUCH GATHERINGS AS MODERATELY USEFUL IN PROMOTING THEIR OWN AND WESTERN INTERESTS IN AFRICA, PARTICULARLY IN ENCOURAGING MOVEMENT TOWARDS SHARING OF THE WEALTH AMONG THE AFRICANS THEMSELVES. WE NOTE THAT THE BANGUI SUMMIT COINCIDED WITH IMPORTANT FRENCH PRIVATE INVESTMENT INITIATIVES IN NIGERIA WHICH HAVE BEEN GIVEN BIG PLAY IN FRENCH PRESS. THUS THE CONTINUED INTEREST OF FRANCE IN ITS FORMER AFRICAN COLONIES SHOULD BE VIEWED IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF RAPIDLY GROWING FRENCH CONCERN FOR OTHER, RICHER AREAS OF THE CONTINENT. END SUMMARY

1. DURING MARCH 21 DISCUSSION WITH US, QUAI DIRECTOR FOR AFRICA REBEYROL EXPRESSED MILD SATISFACTION WITH THE OUTCOME OF THE EARLY MARCH BANGUI FRANCOPHONE SUMMIT. AMONG POSITIVE FACTORS, HE MENTIONED THE GENUINE WARMTH OF THE GATHERING (WITH OLD YAOUNDE ASSOCIATES SEEMING TO BASK IN THE INTIMACY OF AN ALUMNI REUNION IN CONTRAST TO THE LARGER, MORE FORMAL TONE OF THE ACP MEETING AT LOME) AND THE DESIRE OF ALL CONCERNED TO HAVE REGULAR SESSIONS TO TALK OVER THEIR MUTUAL PROBLEMS.

2. REBEYROL VOICED THE OPINION THAT THE SPLIT BETWEEN THE "RICH" AFRICANS (GABON AND IVORY COAST) AND THE FRENCH, ON THE ONE HAND, AND ALL THE OTHER AFRICANS, ON THE OTHER, APPEARED TO BE GROWING. THE RESOURCELESS, LAND-LOCKED, POVERTY-STRICKEN COUNTRIES PUT GREAT PRESSURE ON THE RICH TO HELP THE NEEDIEST. FEW DECISIONS WERE ACTUALLY MADE, BUT AGREEMENT WAS REACHED IN PRINCIPLE TO ESTABLISH A NEW EASY-TERM LOAN FUND IN THE CAISSE CENTRALE DE COOPERATION ECONOMIQUE FOR PROJECTS IN THE POORER COUNTRIES FOR WHICH FINANCING IS CURRENTLY CONFIDENTIAL

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NOT AVAILABLE. FRANCE WOULD CONTRIBUTE THE LION'S SHARE TO THE NEW LOAN FUND, BUT GABON AND IVORY COAST WOULD ALSO ANTE UP. REBEYROL TERMED PRESS DESCRIPTIONS OF THE LOAN FACILITY AS A "SOLIDARITY FUND" INEXACT; HE IMPLIED THAT IT WOULD TAKE SOME TIME BEFORE SUCH SOFT LOANS WOULD BE MADE AVAILABLE BY THE CAISSE CENTRALE.

3. IN FURTHER REACTION TO AFRICAN DEMANDS, THE FRENCH

AGREED TO SUPPORT IN INTERNATIONAL FORUMS SOME AFRICAN ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL CAUSES. THESE INCLUDE THE NECESSITY FOR MAKING A LINK BETWEEN SDR'S AND AID IN INTERNATIONAL MONETARY REFORM AND THE DESIRABILITY OF ESTABLISHING AND MAKING EXTENSIVE USE OF A THIRD-WINDOW IN THE IBRD. THE AFRICANS ALSO ASKED THE FRENCH TO SUPPORT THEIR BELIEF THAT ANY RESERVE GOLD WHICH THE IMF MAY RETURN TO MEMBERS SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED AS AID TO THE THIRD WORLD. THE FRENCH SHOWED COMPREHENSION FOR THE AFRICANS' DESIRE THAT THEY DEFEND THE YAOUNDE ASSOCIATES' INTERESTS AGAINST THE ACP NEWCOMERS, REBEYROL SAID.

4. CONCERNING PARTICIPATION, REBEYROL SAID THAT MOBUTU, WHO CONSIDERS ZAIRE A GREAT POWER, DID NOT ATTEND SINCE HE DID NOT WANT TO ASSOCIATE HIMSELF WITH THE SMALL

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FRANCOPHONE AFRICAN LEADERS BUT THAT HIS COMMISSIONER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS HAD MADE A VALUABLE CONTRIBUTION TO PROCEEDINGS. THE RWANDAN AND BURUNDI PRESIDENTS GAVE THE IMPRESSION OF WANTING DESPERATELY TO BREAK THEIR RELATIVE ISOLATION BY COMING CLOSER TO THE FORMER FRENCH COLONIES. NIGER'S KOUNTCHE MADE A SURPRISINGLY GOOD IMPRESSION ON DIORI'S OLD FRIENDS. MOUKTAR OULD DADDAH IS NOW STRESSING HIS ARABNESS AND THE RECENT CRISIS PRECLUDED MALAGASY REPRESENTATION. REBEYROL OFFERED NO EXPLANATION FOR AHIDJO'S AND N'GOUABI'S ABSENCE, BUT NOTED THAT THE CONGO CONTINUES TO REASSURE THE FRENCH OF ITS DESIRE TO COOPERATE BILATERALLY. REBEYROL CLAIMED THAT THE DECISION NOT TO ALLOW THE SOMALI AMBASSADOR TO FRANCE TO TAKE PART WAS MADE EXCLUSIVELY (AND CORRECTLY) BY THE CENTRAL AFRICANS. HE DOWN-PLAYED INDICATIONS THAT ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE WILL JOIN IN FUTURE FRANCOPHONE GATHERINGS, SAYING THAT NO ONE KNOWS HOW INDEPENDENT GOVERNMENTS IN THOSE COUNTRIES MIGHT EVOLVE. FINALLY REBEYROL SAID GISCARD INSISTED ON TALKING PRIVATELY WITH EACH CHIEF OF STATE AND THAT HIS OBVIOUS, ALMOST SENTIMENTAL ATTACHMENT TO THE AFRICANS WAS FELT AND RECIPROCATED BY THEM ALL.
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